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LANGUAGE TROUBLE

Terminological translations in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*

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ABSTRACT

Jonas Kauppinen: Language Trouble: Terminological translations in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*
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In this thesis, I will examine translations of foreign terminology in the Finnish gender studies textbook *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* (2010). The book consists of articles written by gender studies scholars and functions as an introduction to the subject. Although *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* is written in Finnish, its theoretical terminology largely originates in English. I aim to identify what translation strategies the authors have used when translating these terms into Finnish and to examine possible challenges caused by linguistic and cultural differences. Additionally, I want to discover if the book contains feminist translation.

My material consists of *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* and two English titles that I compare the terminology to: *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates* (2002) and *Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies* (2017). Additionally, I will utilize various gender studies publications in Finnish and English.

The research is mainly comparative. I will focus on terms whose translations are specifically explained, since these indicate possible ambiguity in the translation decision. My hypothesis is that the authors have used several different strategies depending on the term, and that their use is primarily explained by linguistic and cultural factors. I also expect to find examples of feminist translation.

As my theoretical framework, I will utilize literature on terminological translation as well as James S. Holmes's translation theories of retention and re-creation. I will also consider feminist perspectives on language and translation.

I did not find evidence of any single prevalent translation strategy. Instead, the authors utilized various retentive and re-creative strategies, sometimes simultaneously. The translations were partly explained by linguistic and cultural factors, but sometimes also by the author's interpretations. I observed a few instances of feminist translation. I discovered that the major translation challenges were caused by linguistic, cultural, and historical differences as well as the lack of standardization and the prevalence of English terminology in the Finnish literature.

Keywords: Translation, terminology, gender studies, translation studies, feminist theory

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin OriginalityCheck service.

TIIVISTELMÄ

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Tutkin kandidaatintyössäni vierasperäisten termien käännöksiä *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* (2010) -teoksessa. *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* on johdantoteos sukupuolentutkimukseen, joka koostuu alan tutkijoiden kirjoittamista artikkeleista. Teos on suomenkielinen, mutta useat siinä käytetyt teoreettiset termit ovat peräisin englannin kielestä. Tarkoitukseni on selvittää, mitä käännösstrategioita teoksessa esiintyvät kirjoittajat ovat käyttäneet kääntäessään näitä termejä suomen kielelle. Samalla tarkastelen käännöshaasteita, joita kielelliset ja kulttuuriset eroavaisuudet mahdollisesti aiheuttavat. Lisäksi tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää, esiintyykö teoksessa feminististä kääntämistä.

Aineistonani on edellä mainittu *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* sekä kaksi englanninkielistä sukupuolentutkimuksen johdantoteosta *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates* (2002) ja *Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies* (2017), jotka toimivat vertailukohteina termeille. Olen myös hyödyntänyt erinäisiä englannin- ja suomenkielisiä alan julkaisuja.

Tutkimukseni on pääosin vertailevaa. Keskityn erityisesti termeihin, joiden käännösratkaisut on erikseen perusteltu tekstissä, sillä ne viittaavat siihen, ettei valittu ratkaisu ole välttämättä yksiselitteinen. Hypoteesini on, että kirjoittajat ovat käyttäneet termikohtaisesti useita erilaisia käännösstrategioita ja että valitut käännökset selittyvät lähinnä kielellisillä ja kulttuurisilla tekijöillä. Oletan myös löytäväni esimerkkejä feministisestä kääntämisestä.

Sovellan tutkimuksessani terminologian kääntämistä koskevaa kirjallisuutta sekä erityisesti James S. Holmesin käännösmallia, jossa käännökset jaetaan säilyttäviin ja uudelleen luoviin käännöksiin. Tutkimuskohteeni vuoksi otan huomioon myös feministisiä näkemyksiä kielestä ja kääntämisestä.

Tutkimuksessa selvisi, ettei teoksessa esiintynyt mitään yksittäistä vallitsevaa käännösstrategiaa. Kirjoittajat olivat käyttäneet erinäisiä sekä säilyttäviä että uudelleen luovia strategioita, ajoittain samanaikaisesti. Käännösratkaisut selittyivät osittain kielellisillä ja kulttuurisilla tekijöillä, mutta muutamassa tapauksessa myös kirjoittajan omilla tulkinnoilla. Havaitsin joitakin esimerkkejä feministisestä kääntämisestä, mutta en merkittävässä määrin. Löysin myös konkreettisia esimerkkejä käännöshaasteista, jotka ilmenevät kun sukupuolentutkimuksen terminologiaa käännetään suomalaiseen kontekstiin. Kielellisten, kulttuuristen ja historiallisten erojen lisäksi haasteita tuottivat termien vakiintumattomuus ja englanninkielisen terminologian yleisyys myös suomenkielisessä tutkimusympäristössä.

Avainsanat: Kääntäminen, terminologia, sukupuolentutkimus, käännöstiede, feministinen teoria

Tämän julkaisun alkuperäisyys on tarkastettu Turnitin OriginalityCheck –ohjelmalla.

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1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the translations of the field-related terminology in the Finnish gender studies introduction book *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* (Tuula Juvonen, Leena-Maija Rossi & Tuija Saresma 2010). The book, which would be literally translated as “The Gender Handbook,” is a compilation of articles by different scholars of the field and functions as an accessible Finnish-language overview of gender studies. In Finnish universities, it is also often used as a textbook in introductory courses to gender studies. Although the book is originally written in Finnish, it contains a quantity of field-related terminology, most of which originates from the anglospheric culture. I will focus especially on terms that originate in the English language and whose translations are specifically explained in the text. This is because I deem these to be the most interesting ones to examine from a translational perspective. I aim to identify what translation strategies are utilized when translating these terms into Finnish and to examine potential challenges due to linguistic and cultural differences. Additionally, I aim to discover if the book contains examples of feminist translation.

Besides *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*, my material consists of two English language titles with a similar function that I will compare the terminology to. These are *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates* (Anne Cranny-Francis, Joan Kirkby, Pam Stavropoulos & Wendy Waring 2002) and *Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies* (Laura Heston, Miliann Kang, Donovan Lessard & Sonny Nordmarken 2017). I have also referred to gender studies publications and articles in both languages for an additional frame of reference regarding the use of language.

The relationship between gender, language, and translation has been studied before. Scholars like Deborah Cameron and Sherry Simon have written extensively on the topic. However, studies focusing specifically on the terminology of gender studies and its translation are less common but not absent. For example, Ann Werner’s paper published in 2018 *Constructing Terminology and Defining Concepts for Gender Studies in Norway and Sweden* provides a description of two projects in Norway and Sweden aiming to create a vocabulary of gender studies in the respective languages. In Finland, academics have addressed and debated the translations of specific terms, especially *queer*, quite extensively. However, I am not aware of specific translation-focused studies in Finland that would address the terminology of the field on a broader, general scale.

I find the subject interesting because still many of the field’s theoretical terms do not have standardized Finnish equivalents and, as stated, the potential translations of some terms are still

debated within the field. Linguistic and cultural differences can also cause problems, and persons interested in the subject may already be accustomed to the English terminology. Hence, it is not always apparent which terms should be translated and how. Sometimes, a single concept may be referred to by different Finnish words, depending on the preferences and interpretation of the author. Considering these challenges as well as the fact that the social importance of language is often emphasized in gender studies, I find it relevant to examine the book from the perspective of translation studies.

Other reasons for my research are my personal interest and the relevancy of the topic. During the past years, online discourses and social media have popularized many concepts originating from gender studies and feminist theory. Consequently, some words that were previously considered field-related jargon can be observed increasingly in everyday language as well. Furthermore, the language is constantly evolving and some of the conventions today may not hold in the future. In gender studies, critical self-reflection is considered important and it also applies to the field-specific terms and their usage.

My thesis is structured as follows: Firstly, I will introduce the relevant theoretical framework. I will briefly describe the role of language in gender studies and introduce the translation theories used in this study. Secondly, I will describe my material, methods, and research questions. Thereafter, I will move on to the analysis itself where I apply the theory to examine and compare the different translation strategies of the terminology. My aim is not to rate the merits of the translations, but to rather examine how the authors of the book have approached the various challenges of translating this type of terminology. Finally, I will summarize my observations and present conclusions based on them.

2 The theoretical framework

2.1 Gender studies, language, and translation

The relationship between language and gender is a common subject of research in gender studies and feminist theory. The importance of word choices and language use is often heavily emphasized. For example, feminist scholars such as Deborah Cameron have studied the role of language in establishing gender identity by analyzing how gender is performed through speech and word choices (Cameron 1997). Additionally, the focus on language is partly motivated by questions concerning power relations, social justice, and marginalized experiences. For example, in feminist theory and gender studies, the muted group theory has been notably

influential. The theory focuses on the manners in which marginalized groups are muted and excluded via the use of language (Barkman 2018, 3). These discourses around language and exclusion have highlighted a need for more sensitive and inclusive ways of using language. In fact, many scholars in the field are not afraid to break linguistic conventions when it is considered socially justified.

Similar to most scientific disciplines, gender studies also has coined its fair share of terminology that is highly specialized to describe certain experiences and phenomena. For a translator, scientific terminology and field-specific jargon is a challenge itself. The issue becomes even more complicated when one considers the need for the terminology to be socially conscious as well as the fact that not all scholars are in agreement about the terms that should be used. Furthermore, the target language may not feature native equivalents to some of the concepts studied in gender studies. Alternatively, the words for these concepts may have a vastly differing cultural context in the target language, which is especially important to consider given the emphasized social aspect of language.

2.2 Terminology in translation studies

In translation studies, terminology is viewed as a sub-area of translation with its own conventions and guidelines. According to the linguist and terminologist Maria Teresa Cabré, “a translation problem is terminological only when it affects terms, i.e. lexical units with a precise meaning in a given special field” (Cabré 2010, 359). The common guideline is to simply find an equivalent term, and many terminological problems are solved by sufficient research and referencing specialized dictionaries. However, terminological translation problems are not always straightforward. For example, as stated, the target language may not contain an equivalent for a given term or concept. Alternatively, the equivalent terms may not be standardized, in which case the translator must decide between several options.

When the lack of standardized terminology poses a problem, the translator has a few choices. They may coin a new term (neologism), choose to not translate the term at all, or, if there are several possible options, carefully determine which one to select. When making this decision, Cabré (2010, 360) lists several factors that the translator must consider:

- 1) Other proposals and neological criteria established by standardization bodies.
- 2) The general structure of the language and the available lexical resources (including loan and possible adaptations).
- 3) The grammatical possibilities to form new terms.
- 4) The characteristics of the specialized area term system the new terminological unit will form part of and the linguistic viability of the proposed term.

- 5) The chances of being accepted and used by expert group.

From this list, I believe that items 4 and 5 are especially relevant in the context of gender studies, where language itself is viewed critically and not simply accepted as an objective truth.

2.3 Retentive and re-creative translation strategies

In order to analyze and categorize the terminological translations in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*, I will apply the theoretical model introduced by the translation scholar James S. Holmes in 1988. In his framework, translation strategies are foremostly divided as being either retentive or re-creative (Holmes 1988, 48–49). According to the model, a translation is classified as retentive when it preserves the linguistic and cultural influence of the source text. In contrast, a re-creative translation aims to adapt the source text and “recreate” its meaning in the target text and its cultural context. Furthermore, Holmes (1988, 48–49) divides retentive strategies as being *historicizing* or *exoticizing* and re-creative strategies as *modernizing* or *naturalizing*. This is illustrated in the following figure where Holmes divides these strategies into two opposite axes:

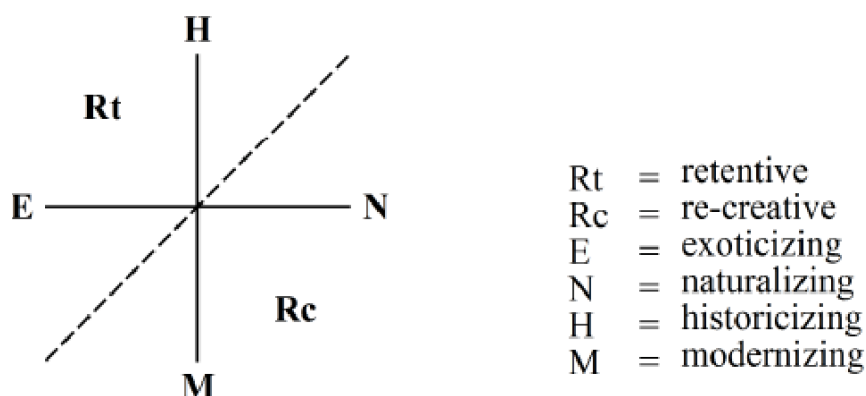


Figure 1 (Holmes 1988: 49)

As the figure demonstrates, this division is not necessarily black-and-white. Often, translation strategies can be considered as a continuum, rather than strictly falling into either category.

While Holmes’s model is applicable to many types of texts, it is important to note that he was originally focusing on the translation of poetry and verse. The reason why I chose to apply Holmes’s theory for this study is mainly its flexibility and versatility. It provides a rigid framework for categorizing translation strategies while still accounting for possible ambiguity and in-between cases. The model is somewhat similar to the influential concepts of *domestication* and *foreignization* introduced by Lawrence Venuti (1995). However, Venuti’s model is more representative of prescriptive translation studies and has been criticized, for example, by the translation scholar Jeremy Munday for not providing a concrete methodology

that could be applied for the analysis of translations (Munday 2012, 231). Although Holmes's and Venuti's theories could be combined, I will focus on Holmes's models due to the limited scope of this study.

For this study, I will use Holmes's concepts of *retention* and *re-creation* as my main categories. However, I will not be strictly applying the notions of *historicizing* versus *modernizing*, and *exoticizing* versus *naturalizing*. These are useful tools, but since this study focuses on terminology, I believe it is appropriate to use more elaborate subcategories based on the nature of the text and the observations of the material.

In my analysis, the translation of a given term is retentive when it is either left untranslated (loanword) or when it is translated literally word-by-word. On the other hand, the translation is re-creative when something in the term is added, modified, and/or omitted by the Finnish writer or when the writer has coined an entirely new Finnish term (neologism). Furthermore, I have included feminist translation as a separate category. Although the examples of feminist translations could technically be categorized as re-creation, I deemed it appropriate to treat them separately in the context of this study. The concept is described in the next section.

2.4 Feminist translation theory as an additional framework

When working with the terminology of gender studies, where unconventional use of language may even be encouraged, it might be useful to consider an additional framework that focuses on the linguistic factors emphasized in the field. For this reason, I want to briefly discuss feminist translation theory, which recognizes and heavily emphasizes the inherent power structures found in language – something that more traditional approaches to translation have often overlooked. Feminist translation theory has its roots in feminist literary criticism and functions as a critical response to the prevailing translation theories. In contrast to more traditional frameworks, feminist translation emphasizes the translator's active participation in creating representation and social norms. It challenges the authority of classical translation studies and criticizes it for failing to problematize linguistic and cultural conventions. As an example, Sherry Simon, who has written extensively on translation and gender, says that translation studies often view culture “as if it referred to an obvious and unproblematic reality” (Simon 1996, p. x). In feminist translation, the focus is less on grammatical rules and equivalence and more on the political and social aspects of translation. Simon goes on to quote the feminist translator Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood: “My translation practice is a political activity aimed at making language speak for women” (de Lotbinière-Harwood, quoted in Simon

1996, 14). I will approach my study from the viewpoint of contemporary feminist theory where the focus is more shifted towards general intersectional oppression rather than solely on societal problems that women face. Nevertheless, I believe the same principles apply.

Considering these factors, I believe it would be interesting to also consider feminist perspectives on language, gender, and translation when analyzing the terminology in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. The framework of this study is largely based on traditional translation theory and I do not aim to disregard it. However, it might not be sufficient by itself, given that the translation goals and ideals of explicitly feminist texts may not be the same ones that traditional views on translation often emphasize.

3 Research position and material

3.1 Käsikirja sukupuoleen

Käsikirja sukupuoleen ‘The Gender Handbook’ is a Finnish-language introduction to the field of gender studies. It is compiled and edited by researchers Tuula Juvonen, Leena-Maija Rossi, and Tuija Saresma. The first edition was published in 2010 by the publishing company Vastapaino. The book is structured as a collection of short articles and essays organized by subject, and it features contributions from over twenty scholars working in the field. The purpose of the book is to function as an accessible introduction to the field that is suitable for both students and interested laypersons. According to the editors, its creation was inspired by the previous lack of such a book in the Finnish language as well as by the notion that the ideas and concepts of gender studies should be made available also in this language (Juvonen, Rossi & Saresma 2010, 10). Today, it is frequently used as a textbook in academic courses in Finland, but it avoids being overtly technical in order to make it as accessible as possible.

One of the most significant challenges in making the book accessible is the use of specialized terminology with a foreign origin. The book has also been slightly criticized for it. Most of the specialized terminology originates from English, and many words used do not have an established Finnish counterpart. Furthermore, there is still notable debate within the field about the use and translation of certain words. Given the previously stated importance of word choices and language use in gender studies, this creates a challenge for the authors. It is not an easy task to bring foreign terminology with differing cultural and historical backgrounds to the Finnish language without losing sensitivity, original meaning, or readability. This problem is also the reason why I find it relevant to study *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* from the perspective of translation.

The language issue is also mentioned in the book. The introduction chapter, written by its editors, states that they deliberately chose not to generalize the terminology, but instead expressed the wish that the writers would explain their decisions in the text (Juvonen et al. 2010, 14). Furthermore, they state an interesting point about the writer's role when translating certain terms and concepts. Namely, the writer can choose to take a stance towards established linguistic norms when they translate terms to suit their own language and culture, utilizing the rules of Finnish grammar and, sometimes, even breaking them (Juvonen et al. 2010, 15–16).

Since *Käsikirja sukupuoli* is written in Finnish, I have chosen two originally English titles as a source language reference for the terminology. These are *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates* (2003) and *Introduction to Women, Gender, Sexuality Studies* (2017). I chose these because they have a similar function as *Käsikirja sukupuoli*. Both are well-received introduction textbooks to the subject written by academics working in the field. They are also modern and provide abundant examples of the terminology of gender studies in the English language. Unlike *Käsikirja sukupuoli*, they are not structured as a compilation with multiple authors. However, this is not a significant difference, since I use them mainly for terminological reference. The reason I chose two titles is to consider possible language variation and development within the field. Additionally, I have referred to various gender studies publications in both Finnish and English for a further frame of reference regarding the use of language.

3.2 Method

To conduct the study, I will compare the Finnish terminology in *Käsikirja sukupuoli* to the more established counterparts used in the English literature of the field. Based on Holmes's (1988, 48–49) translation model of retention and re-creation, I will attempt to observe the translation strategies used and comment on potential translation issues. Furthermore, I will examine whether one can observe applications of feminist translation theory in the translations. In my analysis, I will focus especially on the following research questions:

- 1) What are the main translation strategies used in the translations of the specialized terminology in *Käsikirja sukupuoli*?
- 2) What are the major challenges when translating this terminology into a Finnish context?
- 3) Can the principles of feminist translation theory be observed in any of these translations?

The purpose of my research is not to rate the merits of the chosen translations, but rather to study the challenges in translating gender studies related texts and to examine what translation strategies are utilized in the book.

My hypothesis is that the authors have utilized a variety of different translation strategies depending on the term, and that these strategies are mainly explained by differing linguistic and cultural factors. Additionally, I expect to find some examples of feminist translation.

4 Terminological translations in *Käsiikirja sukupuoleen*

Because this study focuses on field-specific terms in gender studies and their translations, I would like to briefly elaborate on the concept before moving on to the analysis. To define a terminological translation problem, I used Cabré's (2010, 359) definition presented in section 2.2. Thus, in this study, a term is a lexical unit with a precise meaning in the field of gender studies. That being said, gender studies is an interdisciplinary field which also utilizes terms and concepts borrowed from fields like sociology and philosophy. Some frequently used examples of these are words such as *agency* and *subject*. In this study, I will only focus on terms that describe ideas and concepts that are especially relevant or specific to gender studies. Hence, I will not examine terms whose origin is in other academic disciplines unless they have differing or more specific meanings in the context of gender studies. Potentially ambiguous cases will be addressed in the text, if relevant to the translations.

4.1 Primarily retentive translation strategies

I will begin by examining terms whose translations utilize retentive translation strategies. To recap briefly, a retentive translation is defined as any translation that aims to preserve the influence of the source language and culture. The retentive strategies I observed in *Käsiikirja sukupuoleen* were a) literal translation and b) leaving the word untranslated, in other words, using a loanword with no or minor orthographic changes. It is worth noting that, when first introduced, these loanwords were often accompanied by an explanation of their meaning and origin. Because of the addition of extra information, a loanword with an explanation could be considered a re-creative strategy as well. However, because the explanation appeared only at the introduction of the word and not thereafter, I chose to categorize them as primarily retentive strategies. The division into these categories is not always straightforward, and as Holmes notes, translations are practically never purely retentive or re-creative (Holmes 1988, 48).

4.1.1 Loanwords

First, I will examine terms that were left untranslated. These terms appeared either identical in *Käsikirja sukupuoli* and the English reference material or featured only minor orthographic changes to conform to Finnish spelling. From these, the first example I would like to highlight is *intersektionaalisuus* ‘intersectionality’. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the term as follows: “a theoretical approach based on the premise that the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage” (OED 2015). Intersectionality is a central concept in gender studies and has been described by scholars as one of the most important theoretical contributions that gender studies has made thus far (McCall 2005, 1771). Nonetheless, so far, the term does not have a single established Finnish translation (Rossi 2010, 35). In one of Leena-Maija Rossi’s articles in *Käsikirja sukupuoli*, she postulates a verbose Finnish translation as *erojen leikkaaminen, risteäminen ja yhteisvaikutus* ‘the cutting, intersection, and synergy of differences’ (Rossi 2010, 35 [my translation]). However, this translation appears to be mostly for the sake of explanation. Afterwards in the book, the loanword *intersektionaalisuus* is used as such. An exception is found only in the glossary of terms where it appears as *intersektionaalisuus (risteävät erot* ‘intersection of differences’). This single instance could be classified as a re-creative translation, since the loanword and the Finnish translation appear together.

I speculate that there are several reasons for the consistent decisions by different authors to leave *intersectionality* essentially untranslated. Firstly, as Wendy Sigle-Rushton and Elin Lindström point out, it is essentially a loosely specified theoretical concept that brings together a set of complex ideas (Sigle-Rushton & Lindström 2013, 3). Understandably, coining a successful neologism for a complicated, but central term is difficult. Furthermore, the term is so common in gender studies that most people interested in the subject were probably already familiar with it by the time *Käsikirja sukupuoli* was published (2010). In Finland, the concept is also quite well known outside the field. For example, the website of the Finnish Institute of Health and Welfare has a separate page on the subject of intersectionality (THL 2019). Since the term already has some footing in a Finnish cultural context, I postulate that coining a Finnish neologism for it would likely cause more confusion for readers than simply adapting the English word. Revisiting section 2.2 and Cabré’s (2010, 360) list of factors to consider in terminological translations, *intersektionaalisuus* has probably the highest chance to be accepted among scholars in the field.

Another, somewhat similar example of loanwords in the material is the term *queer*. Like *intersectionality*, it is a very central, but multidimensional term without an established Finnish equivalent. Queer studies is its own subset of gender studies, and the history of the term in this context is rather complicated. In the past, the term was used pejoratively against homosexual people, but it has since been reclaimed by activists to “affirm multiple non-heterosexist identities and varied non-heterosexist experience” (Cranny-Francis, Waring, Stavropoulos & Kirkby 2003, 79). In *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*, Pia Livia Hekanaho states that in gender studies the concept *queer* started to represent a new theoretical approach to the discourse around sexual and gender identities, focusing on their naming, history, construction, and redefining them (Hekanaho 2010, 144).

Considering the complexity of the term and its historical connotations, the decision to leave it largely untranslated is understandable. The term and its potential translations have been considered and debated by Finnish scholars quite extensively (Juvonen et al. 2010, 15). To-date, perhaps the most popular Finnish translation is *pervo* which could be literally translated as “pervert”. It has gained some traction and appears sometimes in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* as well, although in conjunction with *queer* and not as a translation by itself (e.g. Hekanaho 2010, 145–148). This is also the reason I address this term as a primarily retentive strategy, although *pervo* is re-creative. Some scholars consider *pervo* to convey a similar affirmation of non-conformity. For example, Lasse Kekki (2006, 13) reasons that *pervo* as a translation causes discomfort and breaks established manners and norms. The notion is about reclaiming a word which is commonly considered degrading. Some other proposed translations listed in the introduction of *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* are *kyseenalainen* ‘questionable’, *kumma* ‘peculiar’, *kiero* ‘twisted’, and *outo* ‘weird’ (Juvonen et al. 2010: 15). Despite these alternatives, the loanword *queer* remains the most frequently used translation. Based on my reading of the literature, there simply does not exist a Finnish word that would clearly convey everything that *queer* represents in the English language. Additionally, since *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* aims to be a general introduction to the field, I speculate that the writers have preferred to use terms that are most widely agreed on. Lastly, I want to note that, in the book, the term *pervo* is used in some terminological translations, but, interestingly, not specifically as a translation of *queer*. I will examine these cases later under re-creative strategies.

4.1.2 Literal translation

The other prominent retentive strategy was literal, word-by-word translation. In these cases, the term was translated directly from English using exact Finnish counterparts. Most of these were fairly straightforward, and literal translation was a common strategy when it was possible to do so without losing the essential meaning of the term. For example, *heteronormativity*, the influential concept that heterosexuality is the norm and default orientation in society (Kang, Lessard, Nordmarken & Heston 2017, 49), was simply *heteronormatiivisuus*. Likewise, *the epistemology of the closet* was translated literally as *kaapin epistemologia*. The concept that was originally defined by Eve Sedgwick is very influential in queer theory and refers to the notion “that the act of hiding one’s sexual orientation reinforces the deviance of that orientation. For example, the act of hiding one’s homosexuality reinforces heterosexuality as the de facto norm” (Rossi 2010: 25 [my translation]). The English “closet” and the Finnish equivalent “kaappi” function as the same metaphor in both languages for having to conceal something. Hence, the term does not lose any of its meaning when translated literally.

Other straightforward examples included *teknotiede* ‘technoscience’ (Rojola 2010, 204) and *vähemmistöistävä* ‘minoritizing’ (Hekanaho 2010, 152). However, the latter example appeared in conjunction with the English term in parentheses. This was probably done to make it clear to what specific concept the term is referring to, since the concept is not particularly well-known. Likewise, the general concept of *performativity* in the context of gender was often translated simply as *performatiivisuus*. In her article in the book, Susanna Paasonen writes initially “performatiivisuus eli (‘i.e.’) esityksellisyys” (Paasonen 2010, 47), thus being another example of using two translations together. The word *esityksellisyys* is practically equivalent to *performativity*, although it also corresponds to the English word “presentational”. The case also highlights the difficulty of categorizing translations strictly into retentive or re-creative. Here, the retentive and, in Holmes’s terms exoticizing *performatiivisuus* and the more re-creative and naturalizing *esityksellisyys* are used together, and the translation can be considered to represent both strategies.

4.2 Re-creative translation strategies

Next, I will address terminological translations that utilize re-creative strategies. In other words, translations that aim to convey the meaning of the original term by re-creating it in a Finnish linguistic and cultural context. Practically, the re-creative strategies consisted mainly, but not solely, of various forms of modification.

4.2.1 Modification

In this study, I define modification as any translation where the author has added, changed, and/or omitted something in the term when translating it into Finnish. As a result, the influence of the English language is often subdued, and the term appears more in accordance to Finnish linguistic conventions. In Holmes's words, the term is *naturalized*. However, there were also some cases where the changes were probably motivated by the author's own preferences and viewpoints. In contrast to *naturalizing*, these translations are more reflective of *modernizing*. I will provide examples of these in the subsequent paragraphs.

The first instance of modification that I want to highlight is the translation of the word *gender* itself. One of the most influential ideas in gender studies and feminist theory is making the distinction between the biological sex and the socially and culturally constructed gender. Today, this distinction is widely accepted outside the field. In English, *gender* is a common word in everyday language as well. Nevertheless, the Finnish language does not have an equivalent for *gender*, and the word *sukupuoli* is used for both gender and sex. Therefore, in Finnish, the distinction must be made by other means. In *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* this is accomplished by simply adding extra information. *Sex* is translated as *biologinen* 'biological' *sukupuoli*, and *gender* as *sosiaalinen* 'social' *sukupuoli* (Juvonen et al. 2010, 12). Instead of using a neologism or a loanword for gender, the term is naturalized and recreated in a Finnish context. Other alternative translations mentioned in the introduction chapter include *anatominen* 'anatomical' *sukupuoli* for sex and *symbolinen* 'symbolical' *sukupuoli* for gender (Juvonen et al. 2010, 12). However, these appear to be listed mainly for the sake of completeness. I will not address them here since they are not used later in the book and a deep analysis would be outside the scope of this study.

It is also worth mentioning that these additions occurred only when there was a need to make this distinction explicitly (e.g. Kantola 2010, 86). In other words, it was generally assumed that *sukupuoli* by itself refers mainly to *gender*. This is exemplified by translations of terms like *gender contract* (*sukupuolisopimus*) and even *gender studies* (*sukupuolentutkimus*). This practice is not surprising given the conventions of the field. As the name of the field indicates, the emphasis is on *gender* and not on biological *sex*. Furthermore, doing otherwise would make the language unnecessarily bloated. In my English reference material, the word *gender* is also used almost exclusively, except when the subject is about this distinction (e.g. Kang et al. 2017, 49).

Further instances of modification that I want to address are the translations of *binary systems* in the context of gender (also known as gender binary or binarism). The *binary gender system* is a critical term for the perspective that only men and women exist, thus erasing and obscuring the existence of people who do not identify as either (Kang et al. 2017, 51). In gender studies, this perspective is heavily criticized. I found the translations in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* interesting, because although it is a basic concept in the field, the translations were somewhat inconsistent and reflect some lack of standardization within the field. For the term *binary*, some authors used the term *kaksijakoinen* ‘two-fold’ (e.g. Vuori 2010, 114; 2010, 318), while others preferred *kaksinapainen* ‘bipolar’ (e.g. Huuska 2010, 156; Kinnunen 2010, 236). Both can be considered re-creative translations, since they are not literal equivalents of *binary*. This inconsistency was only present in the Finnish text, since I found that, in both of the English textbooks, the word *binary* was used exclusively.

Another, slightly different example of modification would be the translation of the term *gay shame* as *pervohäpeä* ‘perversion shame’. Although the term is used only in one article (Hekanaho 2010, 154), I find it an interesting example of a re-creative translation that is more motivated by modernizing than naturalizing. *Gay shame* refers to a concept originating in queer activism that functions as a critique to the “the normalization and assimilation politics of the gay pride movement” (Lähteenmäki 2013, 20). Instead of the literal translation *homohäpeä*, Hekanaho seems to prefer *pervohäpeä*. I speculate that the reasoning is to make the term more inclusive by making it clear that it does not refer solely to homosexual people but to queer identities in general. Thus, the term is re-created and modernized. This makes sense, considering its origins in queer activism and the fact that queer is a broad concept that includes a variety of different gender and sexual identities. However, I found it interesting that the translation was not *queerhäpeä* ‘queer shame’, even though in other contexts *queer* was primarily used instead of *pervo*. The choice was not explained in text, and I assume it is mainly a matter of the author’s personal preference.

Most instances of modification involved either adding or slightly changing something in the term, and I did not observe any notable cases of omission. This may be explained by the assumption that the authors have intended to be as sensitive and exact as possible with the terminology. In most instances, it would be difficult to omit something without losing important information.

4.2.2 Neologism

Another possible way of translating a challenging concept with no target language equivalent is coining an entirely new word for it. Overall, this was not a common strategy in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. Nevertheless, I did find one example that I would like to highlight. Namely, *toistoteko* ‘repeat-action’, ‘action that is repeated’ (Rossi 2010, 15; Jokinen 2010, 128). The term was coined by one of the book’s editors, Leena-Maija Rossi to elucidate Judith Butler’s concept of gender performativity. According to Butler, gender is performed by the endless repetition of everyday actions that give the appearance of femininity or masculinity. These acts include, for example, clothing choices, manners of speech, and ways of thinking (Rossi 2010, 33). Rossi’s *toistoteko* functions as an umbrella term for all these acts, thus making it a neological translation for the act of performing gender. Since its coining, the term has become popular and widely used among Finnish scholars. I do not find it surprising, since *toistoteko* is a short, on-point Finnish word that clearly describes a rather complicated concept. In the terms of Holmes’s framework, the concept is naturalized and re-created in a Finnish context, utilizing the possibilities of the language. My English material did not contain a similar single term for the action of performing gender. Instead, in *Gender Studies: Terms and Debates*, the same concept is explained as repeating a series of performances (Cranny-Francis et al. 2002, 169). The other English title, *Introduction to Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies* did not address the subject directly.

It is also worth noting that underneath the surface, the topic of neologisms is more intricate. They are sometimes difficult to identify and there is, for example, no single objective criteria for when a word ceases to be a neologism. The linguist Richard Nordquist defines a neologism as “a newly coined word, expression, or usage” (Nordquist 2014). Using this definition, some of the terms previously examined could also be considered neologisms. For instance, *pervo* and *performatiivisuus* in the context of gender. Furthermore, I did not address loanwords as neologisms although they could be considered as such. I will not delve deeper into the subject because thoroughly addressing the topic of neologisms in my material is not possible in the frame of this study.

4.2.3 Feminist translation

Next, I want to address the question if the application of feminist translation theory can be observed in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. To distinguish this category from other re-creative strategies, I defined a feminist translation as any translation where something in a term has been

added, changed, and/or omitted specifically in order to highlight its problematic aspects. While “problematic” is somewhat subjective, this definition proved to be sufficient since the instances in my material were quite unambiguous.

In accord to my hypothesis, there were a few instances of feminist translation in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. Nonetheless, these were uncommon. Initially, it would make sense to apply feminist translation to texts about feminist theory. However, considering that the terminology in gender studies is often originally feminist and critical to common conventions, there may not be much to problematize. Certainly, the terminology changes over time, and the field does emphasize critical self-reflection towards its own conventions (Juvonen et al. 2010, 17). However, the change that happens through critical reflection is probably a slow process. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that, in contrast to previous examples, the following examples could also be considered as primarily intralingual translations.

In practice, I found that the instances that can be considered feminist translation utilized quotation marks to problematize the terms. The writing practice is informally known as the use of *scare quotes*. These are defined as “quotation marks that a writer puts around a word or phrase to show that it is used in an unusual way, usually one that the writer does not agree with (OED, 2015). The most frequently used example in my material was “*rotu*” “race”, which was written in quotation marks almost every time it was used (e.g. Paasonen 2010, 42; Juvonen et al. 2010, 15). In the material, this choice is explained by the desire to openly highlight the problematic history and racist connotations of the word as well as to emphasize that it is a social construct (Valovirta 2010, 93).

Interestingly, this approach was not present in my English language reference material, indicating that this is more common among Finnish academics. The concept was problematized especially in *Introduction to Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies* (e.g. Kang et al. 2017, 57). However, quotation marks around the word “race” were never used. The practice has even been criticized by feminists who believe that enclosing race in scare quotes diminishes the real material consequences of racism (Mahtani 2014, 26). There were also a few exceptions to this practice in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* (e.g. Kantola 2015, 82), which may further illustrate a lack of standardization as well as inner disagreements among Finnish academics.

Similar to “race”, scare quotes were also used with the words “*sukupuolivähemmistö*” “gender minorities” and “*vähemmistöseksuaalisuudet*” “sexual minorities”. Unlike with “race”, the choice to use quotation marks was not explicitly explained in the text. However, it is probably

safe to assume that the reasoning was similar. I postulate that, in this case, to highlight the problematic heteronormative assumption of cisgendered heterosexuality as a universal default. In one instance “*biologinen*” “biological” was also written in quotation marks (Kinnunen 2010, 228). Probably, to bring attention to the fact that gender is not purely biological. Like with “race”, I did not find similar examples of scare quotes for any of these terms in my English reference material.

4.3 Analysis: Concluding points

The results of my analysis illustrate the many challenges of translating foreign gender studies terminology into a Finnish context. In some instances, the absence of standardized Finnish equivalents created inconsistencies resulting in different authors using differing terms for the same concept. On the other hand, I did observe some common conventions that were largely abided by. Even without strict standardization, some terms appeared to be more standardized than others. Differing linguistic and cultural contexts provided also their own set of challenges, reflected perhaps most distinctly in words such as *queer* and *gender*. Furthermore, since the theory in gender studies is largely based on the English literature of the field, many scholars and people interested in the subject are probably accustomed to the English terminology. This creates some questions about when one should translate a term into a Finnish context, and when to preserve the influence of the English language. Principally, *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* aims to make the concepts of gender studies available and accessible in the Finnish language. However, paradoxically, due to the popularity of certain loanwords, translating everything may cause more confusion, and, thus, make the text less accessible.

To conclude the analysis, I would like to recap my findings by answering the research questions presented in section 3.4:

- 1) I observed a variety of different translation strategies. Both retentive and re-creative strategies were used, sometimes together. I did not observe any significant tendency towards one over the other. In practice, the main retentive strategies were both literal translation and the utilization of loanwords. Meanwhile, the re-creative strategies primarily involved adding extra information or changing something. Finnish neologisms were present but uncommon.
- 2) Based on my interpretation, the main challenges were the lack of standardization in the Finnish gender studies literature, the prevalence of English terminology even in a

Finnish context, differing cultural and historical contexts, and linguistic differences between Finnish and English.

- 3) There were a few instances of feminist translation. However, it was uncommon and appeared in the context of fairly common words and not in terms originating in the field. In hindsight, this makes sense since there may not be much to problematize in terminology that is based largely on feminist theory.

5 Conclusions

The language and terminology of gender studies can be difficult and somewhat ambiguous. Naturally, the act of translation creates another layer of complexity to it. Even the most commonly used terms may have complicated meanings and historical connotations that are difficult to reproduce in another language. Different authors and scholars may also have disagreements and differing interpretations about particular concepts. These may be influenced by the background of the author. For example, some terms may be personally sensitive especially for people belonging to marginalized groups. Furthermore, the language is constantly evolving, and younger academics may use the terms somewhat differently than their older colleagues. As expected, these challenges were often reflected in the terms used in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. Many translations were not evidently obvious choices, and many authors offered explanations and alternative translations for some terms. It could be said that there was a tendency to not fully commit to a particular translation and to acknowledge that the chosen translation may not be the only viable option.

Based on my readings of the material, I do not believe that there exist any universal answers to the question of how the terminology should be translated. Perfect translations are rarely possible. As often in translation, it depends on the particular situation and context. This perspective could also be observed in the variety of different translation strategies present in *Käsikirja sukupuoleen*. The authors had utilized both retentive and re-creative strategies largely on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes, these were used together in conjunction. For example, by providing a translation but including the English term in parenthesis. This is in accordance with Holmes's notion that translations are often not purely either retentive or re-creative, and rather, exist more on a continuum. As some terminological translations in my material illustrate, it appears that this can apply even on the scale of individual words. In my analysis, this created some difficulties in grouping the translations by translation strategy. In hindsight, this

categorization was perhaps a weakness in my study, and a term-by-term analysis might have worked better for my purposes.

Another limitation of my research was the relatively small scope, which makes it difficult to generalize my findings to other gender studies texts. The fact that *Käsikirja sukupuoleen* includes multiple contributors may give some justification to assume that some of the attributes in its terminological translations apply on a larger scale as well. However, without further research this is mere speculation, and I conclude that this study provides information only on the translations of this particular title.

This study could be expanded in numerous manners. Because a deeper examination of the terms present was not possible in the frame of this study, some relevant factors were probably also overlooked in the analysis. Thus, many of the terms present would warrant a further and lengthier analysis. If possible, directly interviewing the authors and asking about their translation choices would be helpful in this case. Furthermore, a larger sample size including more terms and texts could be used to elaborate on the findings and to examine if they apply on broader scale. Considering additional translation frameworks, for example Skopos-theory, could also prompt further interesting perspectives on the examined translations.

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